

In the claims:

Please amend claims 11, 22, 34, and 35 as follows:

- Sub 3 of:
11. (Once Amended) A method of forming an interlevel dielectric comprising the steps
- providing a first dielectric layer over a surface of a substrate situated on a semiconductor wafer;
- depositing a conductive layer on said first dielectric layer, the conductive layer a lower surface;
- patterning said conductive layer by:
- forming a mask layer on said conductive layer; and
- etching through said conductive layer and into said first dielectric layer, leaving a space between adjacent remaining portions of said conductive layer that extends below the lower surface of said conductive layer, said adjacent remaining portions of said conductive layer forming lines of conductive material each having an upper surface;
- depositing an additional layer on the upper surfaces of lines of conductive material and on said first dielectric layer;
- depositing a layer of dielectric material having a dielectric constant of less than about 3.6 to fill said space;
- removing said layer of dielectric material from the top thereof downward to at least to the level of the top of said additional layer; and
- depositing a second dielectric layer over all layers on said surface of said substrate.
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22. (Once Amended) A method of forming an interlevel dielectric comprising the steps

providing a first dielectric layer over a surface of a substrate situated on a semiconductor wafer;

depositing a metal layer on said first dielectric layer, the metal layer having a lower surface;

patterning said metal layer by:

forming a mask layer on said metal layer; and

etching through said metal layer and into said first dielectric layer, leaving a space between adjacent remaining portions of said metal layer that extends below the lower surface of said metal layer, said adjacent remaining portions of said metal layer forming metal lines each having an upper surface;

depositing a thin layer of silicon dioxide conformably over said metal lines and selectively on said upper surfaces of said metal lines;

depositing a layer of dielectric material having a dielectric constant of less than about 3.6 to fill said space;

removing said layer of dielectric material from the top thereof downward to at least to the level of the top of said additional layer; and

depositing a second dielectric layer over all layers on said surface of said substrate.

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34. (Once Amended) A method of forming an interlevel dielectric comprising:
- providing a first dielectric layer over a surface of a substrate;
 - forming a conductive layer on said first dielectric layer, the conductive layer having a lower surface;
 - forming an additional layer on said conductive layer;
 - forming lines of conductive material having spaces therebetween that extend below the lower surface of said conductive layer from the conductive layer;
 - filling the spaces between the lines of conductive material with dielectric material having a dielectric constant of less than about 3.6; and
 - forming a second dielectric layer on the additional layer.

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35. (Once Amended) A method of forming an interlevel dielectric comprising:
- providing a first dielectric layer over a surface of a substrate;
 - forming a conductive layer on said first dielectric layer, the conductive layer having a lower surface;
 - forming an additional layer on said conductive layer;
 - etching through said additional layer and said conductive layer and into said first dielectric layer, leaving a space between adjacent remaining portions of said conductive layer that extends below the lower surface of said conductive layer, said adjacent remaining portions of said conductive layer forming lines of conductive material;
 - filling the spaces between adjacent remaining portions of said conductive layer with dielectric material having a dielectric constant of less than about 3.6; and
 - forming a second dielectric layer on the additional layer.